



# the water tower.

## uvm's alternative newsmag

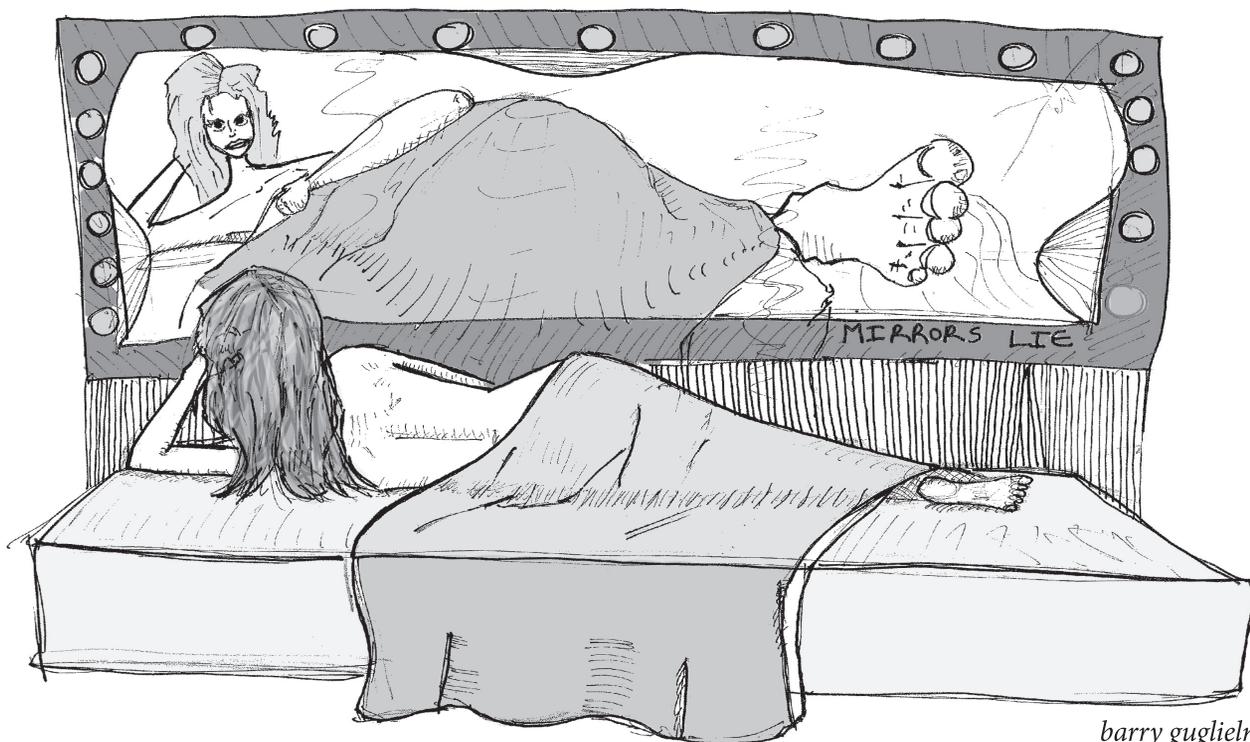
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uvm.edu/~watertwr - thewatertower.tumblr.com

### obstructed image:

## covering up female empowerment

by mikaelawaters



barry guglielmo

The week prior to spring break, I stumbled into one of the women's bathrooms in the Davis Center and onto a curious scene: the mirrors all covered up with large sheets of paper. Across the paper, a purple, cursive-y font displayed slogans about body image and how 'you', the pissed off person just trying to look in the mirror, did not need affirmation from a piece of reflective glass. The papers reassured viewers that you were "more than just a number on a scale," that "hotness comes in all shapes and sizes" and to "be careful how you talk to yourself because you are listening". While I recognized the good intent behind the campaign, having the mirror covered when I was trying to fix my hair and check for pesky afternoon mascara smudges was just plain inconvenient and annoying. Furthermore, I resented what felt like the blaring judgment I was receiving from an inanimate piece of paper—I was simply trying to maintain social politeness and propriety by not looking like I had just rolled out of bed after a rough night.

The campaign did not make me feel inspired, liberated, or want to rip my bra off while chanting 'F-E-M-I-N-I-S-M'. Quite conversely, I felt vain, shallow, ashamed, vapid, and most of all, condemned for be-

ing concerned about how I looked.

In an attempt to empower women above being sexualized, objectified, and marginalized, I argue that many feminist campaigns, intentionally or unintentionally, manage to remove all sense of femininity from feminism. In my opinion, these campaigns teach that a woman taking pride in her appearance or using it to her advantage is fundamentally wrong. The questions that I pose are: 1) How does a woman debase herself and other women by taking care of her appearance? 2) Are there healthy ways to both look good AND feel empowered as a woman? (If you answered "yes" to the second question, that might necessitate a mirror...).

The focus of educating young women should not be to abstain, reject or refrain from one's femininity and appearance, but to project one's fierce, powerful, smart and independent self out to the world. Be that with makeup, tight, killer jeans, or an all-natural look, how a girl chooses to display her power and independence should, in fact, be her choice. Attention to physical appearance doesn't debase a woman or immediately make her a weak pawn in a male dominated society. By 'owning it' and 'workin' what yo mamma gave you' a woman

can say to the world, "I am damn fabulous. I ace college. I can rock a career. I can make men (or women!) weak at the knees, and I can do it all in heels". Empowerment comes from confidence and strength in who you are, mentally, intellectually, and physically.

Glamour magazine addresses this subject in their March 2014 issue stating, "Real, empowered, self-possessed women are sexy. When you're really in control of your choices, your mood, your body, and your opinions, people find you sexy" (115). Though an argument could be made that Glamour is superficial and contributes to issues of self esteem and body image, I believe this specific quote perfectly relays my argument and accommodates many feminist ideals like: control, choice, positive body image, and the importance of a woman's opinion. These are the things that should be taught to young women; empowerment happens when one freely and individually chooses how to represent oneself.

I am confident that the mirror-covering campaign did not intend to disempower mirror viewers, but an action's intention does not always coincide with its reception.

... read the rest on page 7

### between two hard places: obama's comedic comeback

by alexgriffin

The whole "lame duck" presidency thing is a bit of a rough ride; like someone in a pharmacy line to refill a Viagra script, you're pretty much defined by your impotence. As such, American presidents have become increasingly concerned with the problem of their legacy. This isn't just in terms of pardoning babykilling prisoners—they want to make sure their policies leave a lasting print on the nation, that they've shaped the American psyche into their own image, the way that Dubya might now contentedly lean back and wear an easy grin watching an episode of Duck Dynasty.

How your second term legacy pans out eventually comes down to how you carry out to the end the promises you opened with. Clinton had vaguely promised he wasn't merely a venal, sexy dude, yet his second term saw the country trying to figure out the semantics of how sexual intercourse could actually be defined. Nixon came to power pretty much by saying he wasn't Satan, but his legacy came down entirely to him trying to prove that wrong. Comparatively, Reagan's whole Iran-Contra shitshow barely left him a mark, but then again everyone already knew from the start he was an imperialist bullyboy so the whole thing was a bit quelle surprise.

Though Barack won't technically be a lame duck for another two and a half years, the space between now and Vermin Supreme's inevitable sweep to victory in November '16 looks pretty grim. The obdurate Republican House has made it almost impossible to introduce new legislation, and the occasional bumbles in the Obamacare rollout has made the jewel in the Obama crown seem like an expensive homepage glitch. Overall, Obama Reloaded has become a pretty depressing logjam for anyone even vaguely hopey-changey.

Yet, considering that Obama's primary political skill is the transformation of young enthusiasm into action and the pretty wild success of his other memeworthy appearances (slow jam the news be still my heart), appearing on Zach Galifianakis' online talk show, Between Two Ferns to promote the ACA is the kind of solution so supremely logical that absolutely no one would have thought of it. The video's 13 million shares (and counting) as well as the almost immediate 40%

... read the rest on page 3

get inside me: **ukraine** by davidanderson

**uvm secrets** by caito'hara

**epic falls** by colinwalker

**march madness** by mikestorace

# the best news team inbox in the universe.



## the shit list

with katjaritchie

Dear Readers,

Since we aim to be as reliable as UVM's ne'er a snow day (we were SO CLOSE, UGH) policy, we've whipped together yet another issue of the week's hottest news. While we do love what our staffers put together week after week, we're always ready to welcome new voices to the group. If there's anything you'd like to get off your chest, send us a letter or article and we will publish it. C'mon, you know you want your 15 seconds of fame, kid-dos. We'll be eagerly awaiting to publish you until next Tuesday!

With Love,  
The Eds

Sometimes reading **the water tower** makes our readers want to get naked and fight the power. But most of the time, they just send emails. Send your thoughts on anything in this week's issue to

[thewatertowernews@gmail.com](mailto:thewatertowernews@gmail.com)

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## the news in brief

with dannissim

**“We invite all to join us to celebrate this historic event, but we must maintain our guidelines to insure the enjoyment and public safety of our spectators.”**

- The **South Boston Allied War Veterans Council**, the organizing group in the city of Boston's St. Patrick's Day parade, released a statement regarding the rights of parade marchers. The group did not allow LGBT veterans to display their sexual orientation through the use of shirt or sign. In reaction, both Sam Adams and Heineken pulled their sponsorship.

**“He did have one clipped in but not correctly. When I questioned him, he told me ‘I didn't want to ruin my tan.’”**

- Hampshire Police **Sgt. Rob Heard** describes a driver that was stopped for not wearing his seatbelt. Is not wearing a seatbelt to protect a tan like not washing your hair after a perm?

**“We won't allow the people to be devoured by YouTube, Facebook or others. Whatever step need to be taken we will take them without wavering.”**

- Turkish Prime Minister **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** spoke out in an interview with the ATV station. Erdogan is reacting to leaks of audio recordings on sites such as YouTube and Facebook suggesting corruption.

**“This is nothing but a ridiculous jargon of those who cannot understand the advantageous election system of the DPRK as they are engrained with repugnance toward the Korean-style socialist system.”**

- A **North Korean foreign minister** reacted to complaints of the election process in the nation. Kim Jong Un won his first parliamentary election with a landslide 100% vote.

**the water tower** is UVM's alternative newsmag and is a weekly student publication at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont.

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*New writers and artists are always welcome*  
**Weekly meetings**  
Tuesdays at 7:30 pm  
Lafayette L207  
**Or send us an email**

**Our generation stands at a crossroads.** With sincerity and humor, we strive to make you reexamine, investigate, question, learn, and maybe pee your pants along the way. We are the reason people can't wait for Tuesday. We are **the water tower.**

# insane in the ukraine

by daveanderson

As the U.S. college students settle back into their regular routines, slowly readjusting from wonderful spring break beach trips, somebody is clinging to their beach vacation a little too much. That somebody is none other than everyone's favorite autocrat, the Shirtless Slav, Russian President Vladimir Putin. Russian troops moved into Crimea sometime last week presumably for a beach vacation with strategically valuable access to the ocean and have decided that they rather like their home away from home. Putin denies that the soldiers in Crimea are Russian, but his claims that the soldiers seen in Crimea are just pro-Russian Crimeans have not convinced other world leaders. Russia's intervention in Crimea is the latest escalation in the Ukrainian revolution and the ripples have gone across the globe.

In the U.S., the obvious answer to any crisis is to blame Obama; thus, the Crimean crisis is no exception. No far-right republican worth his or her salt has missed this opportunity to balk at Obama's mishandling of the situation. Whether it's Sen. Lindsey Graham who claims that Obama is "weak and indecisive" and therefore "invites aggression" from foreign powers, or McCain claiming that Obama "feckless foreign policy" has caused a lack of faith

in American strength, it all boils down to "Barack Obama is a pussy." Now is it fair to call somebody weak and indecisive just because he did not respond immediately and recklessly to a complex issue? I say hell yeah,

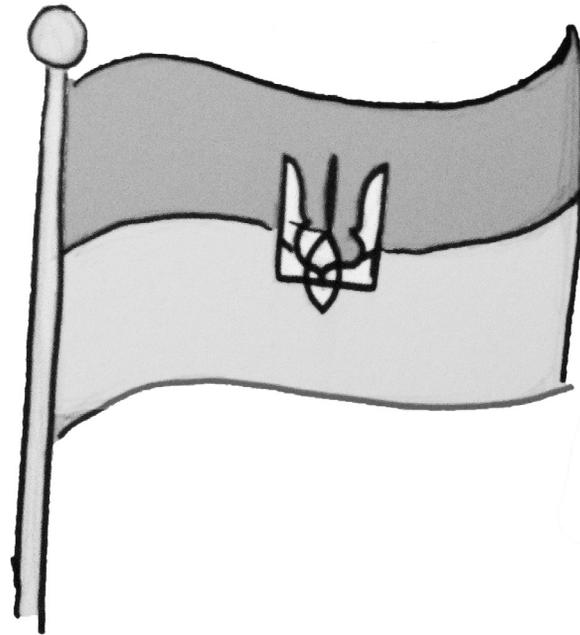
I want my president to react aggressively and without thought to even the smallest of political issues. I want my president to jump head-first, preferably blindfolded, into more lengthy, resource consuming conflicts only this time I want the opposing side to have nuclear weapons. This way there's no

question that America isn't "weak." Hell, I want my president to ride around shirtless on a horse and cuddle with snow leopards and other wild animals; maybe I just want Putin as my president. Now before I tempt

you dear readers with my ideal, overly masculine and reckless president too much and we all go the way of Crimea, I'd like to make the point that maybe reckless action is not a desirable trait in a world leader.

In a time where the world powers are more integrated and reliant on each other than ever before, we as a nation need to learn that the

traditional American bravado may not be the answer to increasingly delicate foreign crises. Crimea is a perfect example of this. When hearsay first got out about Russian intervention in the Ukraine, the first word on everyone's lips was "sanctions." It seems obvious that trade sanctions would be the most effective and peaceful way to discourage Russia, but the catch is that Europe relies on Russia for a large portion of their oil. The U.S. does not want to singularly oppose Russia with sanctions, and European nations would be taking a massive risk in provoking Russia with sanctions. In the end, it does not even look like any of this will get much traction, as much of Eastern Ukraine are open to Russian influence, and Crimea has moved to finalize a bill of secession from the Ukraine. Bottom line is that we cannot solve all of our problems by flexing. Though we do not like to admit it, the Ukraine is much more in the EU's sphere of influence and although we should firmly support Ukrainian independence, it is the European nations that will be bearing the heaviest burden should conflict arise. Therefore it is not America's place to lead the charge against Russia before our allies are even certain of what they want. ■



## people sick of revolutions in authoritarian countries

by dustineagar

Reports indicate that citizens of first-world, democratized countries are sick and tired of hearing about popular uprisings toppling authoritarian regimes and of political unrest generally. Over the last several years, the evening news has been replete with images of cars ablaze and large groups of oppressed citizens occupying national capitols in the hopes that their demands for equality and democratization are heard. Abuses of armed forces by entrenched dictators have filled the D block and middle pages of the New York Times. Citizens of the developed world find themselves wondering whether there may be more important demands on their capacities for empathy.

"Seeing autocrats toppled in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, and Libya made me feel like there was hope for the political fortunes of oppressed citizens around the world," reported a local man when interviewed for this story. As he went into a nuanced discussion of the geopolitical paradigm shift brought on by the Arab Spring revolutions, the ongoing civil war in Syria and firm international resolve to do nothing about use of chemical weapons against civilians there, sources confirmed that he appeared to be "sick and tired of hearing about this type of thing all the time."

Major protests in Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Morocco, and a successful (on paper) secession referendum by South Su-

dan following decades of genocide there have added to the exacerbation. Cynical observers everywhere have placed such lofty expectations on peoples' attention spans as to expect everybody to understand and anticipate the full weight of these events and their effects on the global political order. These expectations may have been unfair in light of muted public responses to major domestic issues like

**"these days, even the most outspoken of political activists change the channel when the world news segment comes on"**

the expanded jurisdiction and authority of secret courts in the United States.

Sources confirm that recent protests in Venezuela and Thailand have pushed tolerance for news of political upheaval to the breaking point. People were apparently okay with a massive wave of political upheaval spreading from country to country, so long as it was contained to North Africa and the Middle East. Now that such unrest is not neatly confined to an area on a map, people's

attention spans are being tested, leaving Venezuelans and Red Shirts in Thailand wondering if their plights are being discriminated against on the basis of race. Preliminary reports indicate that the movement of Russian troops onto the Crimean peninsula in Ukraine after violent clashes between government forces and opposition groups and the removal from office of President Yanukovich were "just too much", and prompted many to simply tune out rather than trying to make sense of an extremely complicated situation.

Years of mass protests around the world, oppressed citizens casting off the chains of dictatorship by taking to the streets, and new hope for those living under the thumb of brutal autocrats certainly appears to have taken its toll on people living comfortably in democratic, industrialized countries. Having to constantly adapt their political worldviews to rapidly unfolding events around the world, questioning the integrity of the present world order, and needing to periodically purchase new maps has steadily worn down peoples' patience. These days, even the most outspoken of political activists change the channel when the world news segment comes on. Sources confirm that people would much rather assume that these problems will "work themselves out eventually" and that their iPads were manufactured by unionized labor under fair, safe working conditions. ■

### OBAMA-DY - continued from pg 1

spike in traffic to healthcare.gov speak for themselves; people go nuts for this kind of thing, and it translated into action. That said, Obama's episode was pretty flat Pong 1.0 banter compared to Galifianakis attempting to molest Michael Cera; I'd liked to have seen Zach in Tairy Greene: 'The Snuggler' mode, hugging out Obama's issues as the POTUS weeps, softly muttering 'Boehner'.

Of course, the fact that the appearance so obviously worked raises a whole

set of pajamas of new questions, though. Is our President now so hemmed in that a viral video is the only way to effectively communicate to a targeted audience, or was this just a creative, clever response to a particularly intractable situation? Is there any difference between a president appearing on American Bandstand and one turning up on Funny or Die? Or Letterman, for that matter? I don't want to Glenn Beck anyone here, but we've all heard our grandparents talk about the

diminishing substance of current politicians compared to the ones they had back in their day (my granddad has a great spiel on Ben Chifley). Considering there are two and a half long years left of trying to make good on the promise of change, there's a risk inherent in Obama hitting the meme button too often; that diminishing returns will set in faster than you can say 'doge', and that for short-term lolz he'll lose long term stature; how long until he jumps the

meme-shark? For now, though, results speak for themselves, and any number of goes round at BTF would have to be better than another *Hangover* sequel. ■

# around town.



## welcome to the gun show:

## my experience with *military fitness*

by wesdunn

It is six in the morning. I'm at the pool, standing at the edge of the diving board. I'm blindfolded with a wet camouflage rag, and in my outstretched arms I'm holding a "rubber ducky." At least that's what the ROTC kids call it. If I had to define it, I'd probably go with "surprisingly heavy realistic looking fake rifle."

"You're at the edge, good to go. Whenever you're ready." The cadet (is that what they're called?) behind me helpfully informs me. Thinking of how much water I'm about to get in my nose, I hold my breath and step off the edge.

Welcome, friends, to military fitness—a 1 credit PEAC class that convenes at 6:30 on Wednesday mornings (sound early? The ROTC folks are finishing up by then. Seriously, what the fuck) to painfully chisel your worthless body into that of a glistening Greek god. Or something like that. The pool session I described was a very unique class as far as they go—it was actually one of the easier ones. We just had to do that weird diving board thing, get out of a backpack underwater and swim to the surface, tread water for a bit, swim some more, and learn how to make pants into a flotation device. Most of the time, we just meet at the turf fields and do grueling workouts.

I've always considered myself relatively fit—I ran in high school and still do so today. But I'd never really considered doing many sit ups, push-ups, or "planks" (where you get into a push-up position and instead of your hands, bend your arms and have your whole forearm on the ground. Don't move, just hold it. It'll seem like no sweat for like five seconds. Then it will seem like you're being pulled apart by teams of horses). At military fitness, you do a lot of push-ups. Before the class, I couldn't do more than 10 at a time, max. This week, to warm up, we stretched a little and then did a casual sixty.

The instructor is a multiple tour veteran who, you

know, speaks softly. He doesn't scream at you like the movies, he just says it with a somewhat dispassionate yet completely unchallengeable tone. Before you can really question why you might want to do so, he'll have you doing pushups not until you're tired but until your arm muscles simply won't contract like that another time. Pretty much

the fuck not. Maybe pick up a giant tire and flip it over while you're at it). Gradually, you'll find yourself able to do more and more, until halfway through the semester 40 pushups is like, totally whatever.

I get that this is not exactly a great pitch for the benefits of taking this class, and I mean, yeah, it's not "fun" in any conventional sense of the word. But you only have to work as hard as you want to. He's really clear about that—you're here on your own volition, he won't force you to do anything. But if you do what he suggests to the best of your ability, there's no judging, and I've been really psyched with how much I've improved in a pretty quick span of time. Technically we're aiming to see if we can pass the military fitness test, a rather simple (read: straightforward, not easy) exam in three parts: do as many push ups as you can in two minutes, as many sit ups as you can in two minutes, and then run two miles in less than thirteen minutes. So far, I can only do one of those things. Guess which one. But there's more to the class than that.

There's a really great feeling in working at the same endeavor with a bunch of other people, and it's a pretty supportive atmosphere. There's also nothing like the sense of achievement and self-confidence you get from doing something like this. You go about the rest of your day knowing that you have already made a substantial deposit into your fitness karma bank. You get to watch the sun rise in the remarkably uncrowded Grundle. Your body gets fabulous. Sexual solicitations increase at least 40%. But yeah, most importantly, you feel damn good about yourself. Not everyone doing this is a gym rat or anything like that. It's mostly just a bunch of fitness plebeians working to improve. The class is really about challenging and improving yourself, and I think this really makes it one of the gem opportunities hidden here at UVM. ■

## RALLYCAT'S FITNESS JOURNEY

Before



After



yin yefko

every week I've experienced that now familiar feeling of having reached my absolute limit.

But here's the thing: That limit keeps getting higher and higher. If you asked me to drop and give you twenty right now, I could actually do that with not too much difficulty. It's like haggling with your body—if it starts by telling you it'll only do like 2 or 5 or 10 push ups, you ask it to do 100 (with shuttle sprints interspersed throughout, why

# the three darkest *uvm* secrets

by caito'hara

We all know that some pretty shady shit goes down behind the scenes here. Studies on student behavior, the (yet to be proven....) addition of laxatives to the foods. By now you're thinking to yourself, you must know all the dirty secrets of this esteemed university. Guess what? You don't. In a **wafer tower** exclusive, we're revealing all the things the administration doesn't want you to know. Buckle up kiddies; it's going to be a bumpy ride.

### The "Induction Ceremony"

So we didn't get to do this my freshman year (thanks, Irene...), but as a curious individual, I snuck over to the ceremony this past fall. At first it seems like a happy-go-lucky, "Hey, welcome to UVM!" sort of thing, but then you start digging deeper: memories returning of an eerie pulsing light, and nonsensical whispers coming from nowhere. There was a metallic tang in the air, a flavor so pleasant you wished it would never end, you're brain moving sluggishly, unable to pin point where you've tasted it before.

These are the suppressed memories of the blood sacrifice they don't tell you about. I didn't believe the rumors at first; that was before I saw it myself. You'll recall that people seemed to trickle off, almost by shirt color, though in the shadows it was hard to tell. I followed one of these groups, on a silent, almost trance-like trek to Centennial Woods. It was there that they assembled in a silent ring, lit only by candlelight. I waited amongst the trees with baited breath, as an RA neatly beheaded an oddly quiet chicken. Immediately after which I folded and high tailed it out of there.

I can't quite tell you exactly what the whole thing was about, but I can tell you this: no one I spoke to later remembered a thing.

### The SGA's Clubhouse

This is one of the more poorly kept secrets, as a leak occurs every five or six years, but they've managed to keep it mostly underground. See, the SGA has this house, an unassuming little place really. From the outside, you would never guess that it was anything more than a run-of-the-mill college student apartment. But on the inside, it's anything but ordinary.

The foyer is lit with hidden LEDs, tucked in hidden nooks and framing portraits of distinguished past members. At the end of the hall, you'll find a set of stairs leading down, with the tinkling sounds of classical music wafting towards you. Down the stairs leads to a chamber, and that's really the only word to describe it. I have no idea how they engineered that shit, but the ceiling is at least 10' up, and in the center of the room was a table that you could fit at 27 course meal on. Which is exactly what it is used for.

See, when the SGA feels they have done a particularly spectacular job of being semi-involved in some decision (whether or not that's true is up for debate still), they retreat to this chamber. There, they eat, drink, and be merry like it's 1525. I'm talking elaborate meals straight out of Game of Thrones, all the best local beers (or juice for the youngsters, they have an image to maintain), and outfits that would be more fitting at a Renaissance fair. Guess we know what happens to the leftover funds...

### The Coffee is Addictive

I know they tell you it's Green Mountain coffee; I'm here to tell you that that's a bullshit lie. Unlike many people, on average I don't mind, and actually kind of like Green Mountain. The stuff I get on campus? No, no, definitely not. Yet I diligently refill my thermos, almost every day I'm on campus. Sure, every now and again I'll do Cyber Café or Henderson's, but it's usually the Marketplace and good ol' GMC. It wasn't until recently that I came to the conclusion that there must be more to it. We know they put laxatives in the food; they must be putting a mildly addictive substance in the coffee.

Why else would everyone so consistently purchase it, even if six days out of seven by the time you get halfway through a cup it tastes like the tears of dying children? You could argue the convenience or the fact that it's the most widely available coffee on campus, and you wouldn't necessarily be wrong. But I know, I just know, that there's more to it than that.

*I'm sure there's more that I haven't heard of, but nothing can stay hidden forever. I have a whole year left to discover all of the others, and I vow that it will happen! If you hear any whispers, please send them along. ■*



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**Jenna**  
Political Science '14



The University of Vermont

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## one visit, one meal: an ode to **revolution kitchen**

by lauragreenwood

*Revolution Kitchen - 9 Center St., Burlington (or right next to the Daily Planet!)*

It could be called a slight obsession or a case of stalking from a distance, but ever since I caught wind from *Seven Days* that an exclusively all-vegetarian restaurant was coming to Burlington I've had my heart set on Revolution Kitchen. Unfortunately, life gets busy and wallets get shallow, so despite my wishes I'd never set foot in the establishment. I'd like to dedicate this article to my roommate's dad, for without you my dream would have never (well, probably not ever) been achieved and my appetite satiated. Really, bless all you parents for taking us college kids out for dinner on the town sometimes.

Upon entering the place, my admiration for Revolution Kitchen continued to blossom. An intimate proximity to the kitchen let me personally chat with the cook about what I should order. Friendly customers at the bar seating initiated friendly banter and taught me about all the various local drafts available on tap. The soft lighting and simple tables had my romantic heart swooning at the setting's beauty. With plants decorating the room, a sweet candle on each table, and cute pro-vegetarian articles in the bathroom, Revolution Kitchen felt welcome and down to earth. We sat down fast and got service even faster which was much appreciated as it was 9pm on a Friday night and surely I felt I'd die of starvation

very soon.

Hands down, this is the best food in terms of freshness and flavor I have had in Burlington in three years. Yeah, I said it—the BEST. I started with the nachos which weren't your usual chain restaurant heaping of standard fixings;

**“hands down, this is the best food in terms of freshness and flavor I have had in burlington in *three years*. yeah, I said it—the BEST.”**

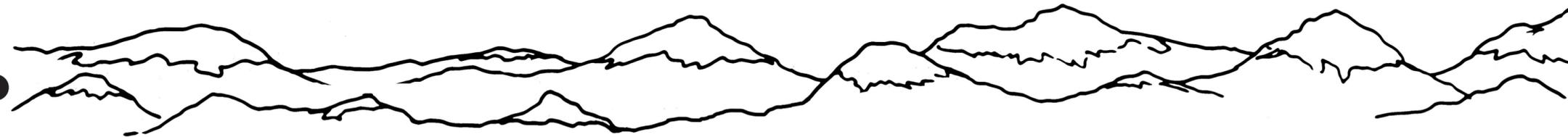
each nacho was a wonton pocket of guacamole goodness, crispy and brilliant. As an all-veg place, they know how to do beans—a quality I find absolutely vital. After sneaking a bit of my roommate's arugula and squash salad, and a spare sushi roll, I anxiously anticipated the delicious meal yet to come.

I had the Revolution Tacos...gah. Again, I bring up the point of their amazing beans. Coupled with the kale, the mushrooms, the sweet potatoes, and THE GUAC, I se-

riously couldn't handle the awesomeness colliding in my mouth. I'm a hot sauce fiend, and again the RevKitch anticipated my need-for-heat with a local brand already on the table. There are only two issues I had with the dish that I had to navigate around: too small soft taco shells paired with too excessive amount of filling. As a food appreciator, these obstacles weren't a challenge but rather an opportunity to draw from my more barbarous side and show my company how unafraid I am to get down and dirty with my food. Unfortunately, I couldn't finish it. I'm still ashamed of this fact as a Clean Plate Club member but don't worry, guys, I still managed dessert (pscht...and you doubted me). A few spoonfuls of chocolate on chocolate cake and I sat back and reveled in the food pressure in my tummy.

So after months of reading reviews, endless suggesting to friends and family, and one meal later, I'm hooked on the Revolution Kitchen. The average for a night there is somewhere around the \$20-\$25 range, and I HIGHLY recommend it as a date spot that will leave your hottie impressed, satisfied, and happy. Revolution Kitchen radiates localvore love and, with great food that (finally!) lets the individual ingredients shine, you'll surely have a meal that puts a smile on your face. ■

# reflections.



## epic fall! *top 4 times i lost my balance*

by colinwalker

#1:

*Spring Break, 2014:*

I stayed in Burlington, this past break. Like the many giddy girls, poised to take an Instagram photo of the scenery, I ventured to the lake with some buddies to take a gander at the nature as well. The treads of my Doc Martins are pretty worn down, and not best for icy surfaces anymore. With a bottle of Stolli Vodka in one hand, and a Nalgene bottle in the other, we started onwards up onto the Colchester Causeway. We were casually strolling along, when suddenly I ate it. In my body's quick reaction, I broke the Nalgene and saved the Vodka. It was still a good day.

#3:

*WT Party, This February:*

So, as UVM goes, streaking is a common practice. Whenever I'm asked to go, I'm typically always down, and I'm not sure whether people are starting to question my willingness, but whatever. I'm gung-ho to drop trou, whenever the occasion calls for it. Letting go is a good thing. Anyways, an icy, snowy night, I was down for it. Running out of Converse Court, however, I immediately slipped. Taking a right turn on Hickock, I slid down on my right side with great impact, like a hammer hitting a nail, and then the handle of the hammer following through. The next thing I knew, a naked girl was falling right in front of me. Then another girl tripped over her. All three of us ate it, because I slipped. Before I got up, I recall one guy running on, shouting, "White girl down!!" I have scars from this, and it's certainly a fall I'll never forget.

#2:

*Middle School, Age 13:*

Swim class was always fun. I was one of the advanced swimmers I guess, and I always liked moving around in the pool. I had a great gym teacher back in middle school named Mr. Berkowsky. I really liked going off the diving board, and I was getting used to different tricks. One class, pretty much everyone else had gone back into the lockers to get ready for next period, but I was last up on the diving board. Little did I know, the kid before me set the board to 10, meaning that it was at the maximum bounce. I went soaring into the air so high that my natural reaction was to swing my arms out and begin swimming in mid-air. The result was my coming to the surface of the water, flailing, and with a slamming impact. Ever memorable and graceful was this fall. I came out of the pool, with welts and all, and Mr. Berkowsky checking up to make sure I was okay. After that, I became a belly-flop master.

#4:

*Winter Break, First Grade:*

The first time I ever sipped alcohol was in St. Thomas. I was only seven, but my dad realized no harm could come from giving me a mere sip of his rum milkshake. Now, St. Thomas is a quite hilly island, with roads that wind in and out. It was a half hour drive to our house, and when we finally got back, I raced up the steps and flung the bathroom door open, just as the sweet milkshake of my own (something that tasted like oranges and cream), came up into the toilet. It did so with such force that it splashed out some of the toilet water. When I took a breath of air and then walked back to the bowl, I slipped on that water, hurling my face to the porcelain brim. Coming out of the bathroom, crying, with vomit on me, my parents told me to tell kids, "You should see the other guy." When I knew my black eye came from a toilet. ■



## not buying it: the *skymall* collection

by staceybrandt

After squeezing into seat between a large, Southern woman and a baby, I am personally informed by a flight attendant that in preparation for take-off it is ESSENTIAL that I: click my tray table up, jam my backpack even further under the seat in front of me, power down my cellular device, power down my bad attitude, really stop texting, and really stop believing that I'm as pretty as my mother says because playtime is over, ma'am. Thus begins the inevitable contemplation of first world problems which occurs precisely between departure from the gate and five minutes before take-off. Many people fail to realize the absurdity of public air transportation. Right now, I will focus on only one aspect of this absurdity, that being SkyMall Magazine.

SkyMall Magazine can be found right between the white, paper airsickness bag that appears to double as storage for school lunches (in solid form) and the pamphlet of emergency yoga positions featuring the "Airborne Auto-Erotic": In event of an emergency 1) Place your head between your knees 2) Pleasure yourself. Removing SkyMall from the seat pocket and flipping through, it is unclear whether it is expected that airplane passengers will purchase an array of ridiculous items in some sort of air-induced shopping mania: "Honey, look. We're in the fucking sky. We have every reason to buy this 'Bigfoot, the Bashful Yeti' tree sculpture on page 61. It's only \$70, Frank."

After spending half a retirement fund to fly through the air to someplace you will only remember by a souvenir keychain, SkyMall Magazine features just the items to provide comfort, making you realize there are MANY worse things you could have spent your money on. I will now form a list of selected treasures from SkyMall, treasures which never fail to provoke real, existential, "What the fuck?" moments. (Concerning product names and prices, I am using only those that are actually published in the magazine—honestly, I couldn't make half of this shit up if I tried):

1) **Biffy Buttler, \$99.99:** This is a bidet (a butt sprayer) with an attachment for a roll of toilet paper and a "digital accessory" such as an iPad because one's valuable time need not be flushed down the toilet. It's all very logical: While disposing of bodily waste, one can check stocks, respond to emails, Skype with a friend, or form a Christian Mingle account. After that productive use

of time, one can propel a pressurized, cleansing stream of water into one's rear, freshen up with some toilet tissue, and then respond to all parties interested in that Christian Mingle account.

2) **GuitDoorbell, \$149.99:** Usually walking through a doorway is boring—where's the pizzazz? Where's the music? Well, purchase GuitDoorbell and add a little pep to that first step in and out of your favorite room. This half-size, novelty guitar (a real guitar!) attaches upside-down above a doorway while a simple picking device on the top of the door works to strum a single chord as the door is opened and closed. Great for all parties who just can't get enough of that open G. Also perfect for those interested in explaining that, yes, it was a sign from Jesus when a small guitar fell from the sky and sent Great Aunt Myrtle up to heaven.

3) **"Mademoiselle Haute Couture" Floor Lamp Statue, \$549.00 (+\$99 shipping):** Over six feet tall, this lighting decoration cast in a black, faux leather finish, depicts a curvy female body in a tight, contour dress with her head as a lampshade. Her body language shows carefree class and a sassy attitude with one hand on her sculpted hip. Her knee high boots are forever sexy and chic. Her lampshade head says, "I'm fun and functional, I'm the light of your life, and I'm getting ALL of the attention at your party." Warning: SkyMall is not responsible for any form of infidelity involving your boyfriend, husband, partner, etc. and this decorative statue.

4) **"It was Me. I Let the Dogs Out." Exclusive Sweatshirt, \$29.95:** Show your natural wit and social relevance with this understated cultural reference. This intellectual garment provides a concrete statement and one possible solution to the highly debated question of who, in fact, let the dogs out? A question most famously posed by musical group, Baha Men, in 1998, this shirt can serve as both an opening statement and final remark for any discussions concerning the relative internal/external relationship between dogs and interior space. For example: "Why were the dogs inside to begin with?", "Can dogs really achieve a moral existence in the outside world?", or "Is it possible that dog, clearly the inversion of God, exists both inside AND outside, simultaneously, forever and always?" ■

## in case you *missed* it: borderlands 2

by benberrick

Let me get this right out of the way: I am a filthy console peasant. I know, computers are better, faster, and more customizable, but the old Xbox was cheap and promised high definition stories that would start right up, so I took the bait. Unfortunately, I acquired my Xbox late in my life and now, because of UVM's generous commitment to liberating me from my life savings, I am what can only be described as "hella fucking poor." Such as it is, this means that I can't afford to update my hardware to the next generation or play any of the newly released Blockbusters right away. My selection therefore has been limited to the bargain bin and cheap digital downloads of the best games of years past.

I found a Game of the Year version of Borderlands 2—one of the big hits of 2012—available for \$20, and, with roommates who wanted in, the split screen local multiplayer seemed worth the price. For the first week that I played, I enjoyed myself in an on-again-off-again kind of way; without any real amount of time to sit down and really immerse myself, leveling was slow going and the environment simply felt like a predictable onslaught of challenges. It was certainly a good opportunity to turn off my brain, and the gameplay was both visceral and satisfying, but it lacked a certain je ne sais quoi to really draw me into the world.

Oddly enough, it was the death of the family dog right at the beginning of spring break that facilitated my Borderlands renaissance. Consumed with grief and hunger (see aforementioned poverty) alone in my apartment, I plopped down, created a new character, and fell in love with the game.

It takes place on the planet of Pandora five years after the events of the first game and you play as one of four—or of six, if you get the expansions—treasure seekers called "vault hunters." These playable protagonists are the successors of in the heroes of the first Borderlands, who initially pursued a fabled cache of loot within an ancient alien vault (I won't spoil

it, if you haven't played the first Borderlands, but needless to say, things get fucky much faster than it would if only plain, non-extraterrestrial treasure was involved).

Each character plays in an entirely different manner. There is Axton, a former commando who can toss out a turret to aid him in battle; Maya, a no-nonsense woman with rare magical powers; Salvador, a hulking behemoth who can carry big guns in both hands, and Zer0 the assassin who can turn invisible to backstab

**"the game trusts the player to make a character *their own* beyond superficial patches, flags, or tags."**

enemies or scope out higher ground to escape. Regardless of whom you choose, a comprehensive talent tree system allows you to specialize your character to suit your play style. Want to force-choke the big baddie in the middle while you dispatch his minions with the fastest gun you've got? Maya has a tree for that, but also one for healing herself and teammates. Prefer to hunker down behind boulder and pick off advancing attackers? Zer0 has a talent progression for it, but also one for escaping combat, leaving only a dagger in a marauder's back as evidence that you were there. Though the game gives a basic backstory for each character, it leaves the bulk of fleshing them out to you, which is a rare quality in modern shooters. The game trusts the player to make a character their own beyond superficial patches, flags, or tags.

Though notable in many aspect, the greatest strength of Borderlands 2 is the writing. Non-Playable Characters (NPCs) are given a life of their own in a way that feels dynamic. At any moment, you might overhear roaming psychotic bandits screaming nonsense about "meat bicycles but seconds later, before you can laugh or consider them harmless, their conversation can turn disturbing and sadistic in a way that reminds you just how dangerous an environment your character occupies. Dialogue is also tinged with a kind of self-aware irony that playfully mocks not only the post-apocalyptic setting and character development, but also videogames as a medium, along with the tropes that the RPG genre employs. In one memorable instance, a labyrinthine, seemingly impossible quest to find a secret cache is given to you only to have some sheet metal fall away behind you to reveal the cache, much to the quest giver's embarrassment.

The game also makes you think about what it means to be the protagonist. The primary antagonist, a power-mad sociopath named Handsome Jack constantly chirps in over the radio reminding you that, to him, you are little more than another brutal bandit, and that it is he who is the hero. While his actions are certainly not morally ambiguous, it's a little reminder that a simple shift in perspective could make you the villain of your own story: a message that, especially for violent videogames, is particularly fascinating and subversive.

For me, the ultimate judge of a game's narrative quality is whether it can make you feel for the characters, and Borderlands 2 accomplishes this with a kind of subtle finesse that has left me impressed. I gasped, I cried, I laughed (both hard and often), and can't wait to make a new character and play it through all over again. If you missed it the first time around and are looking for a great cheap game, give it a shot now. See you on Pandora!

Rating: 9/10 ■



julianna roen

**BODY IMAGE** -continued from pg 1

I am sure that there are many people who disagree with what I am saying. As I refute being told to forsake physical concerns, others would similarly contest a movement suggesting that they pay more attention to their looks to gain empowerment. On the whole, I believe a gal should represent herself how she wants and if that requires looking in the mirror, so be it! With curves, lined eyes, thick lashes, and a good measure of lipstick to knock em' dead, a woman can embrace being feminine and still be independent, empowered, and successful. And no one is going to tell me otherwise. ■

# highlight reel.

## dare to zlatan

by zackpensak

Anyone who claims to be a European football fan should know at least one thing about the Swedish superstar Zlatan Ibrahimović: he is the man, and he knows it. First, consider that he had the audacity to attempt a bicycle kick from over 30 yards out in an international friendly against England last November. Forget about the fact that the shot actually went in, it takes some low-hanging cojones to even think about that nonsensical goal. Next, do some quick research about what he thinks regarding the fact that he has never won the Ballon d'Or, the annual award given to the best footballer in the world. In an interview last fall, instead of admitting to being disappointed, he simply claimed that, "I don't need the Ballon d'Or to know I'm the best. It matters more to some players." In his mind, he does not have a point to prove. All that matters to Zlatan is what he thinks of himself. The man is extremely cocky and self-absorbed, there is no denying that, but instead of meriting disdain from fans, the opposite has occurred. Zlatan's constantly ballooning ego is what makes him so great.

Of all the things that Zlatan has done to draw attention to himself, his current campaign may be the most outlandish, the most absurd, of them all. Nike recently began releasing t-shirts with the phrase "Dare to Zlatan" on them. To the average shopper, the wording of this shirt may be puzzling, the same as if there was a "Dare to Tom Brady" or "Dare to Derek Jeter" clothing line. How can you dare to be a first name? But this is where the tomfoolery begins. About a year and a half ago the Swedish government announced that "Zlatan" was to be officially recognized as a word in the Swedish dictionary, a verb meaning "to dominate". That alone is bonkers. Americans joke about "Tebowing" or "Linning", knowing that those words are just going through a phase of popularity. But for a man's name to be eternally cemented in the language of a nation

is on a whole other level. I can already imagine a contestant's final question before winning the Swedish national spelling bee: "Can you use Zlatan in a sentence?"

Zlatan is a smart man, realizing that the best way to market his new brand was through social media, especially Twitter. The phrase Dare to Zlatan is his tag: his catchphrase. So it was no surprise when on February 1st, Zlatan's Twitter account, @Ibra\_official, began using it as a hashtag. People immediately caught on and it started trending on Twitter. However, Zlatan was not settled with #DareToZlatan to be simply trending. So on March 10th,

**"In the 36 games he has played for PSG this season he has scored 38 goals, 23 of which were in league play, giving him 9 more goals than the second leading scorer in Ligue 1."**

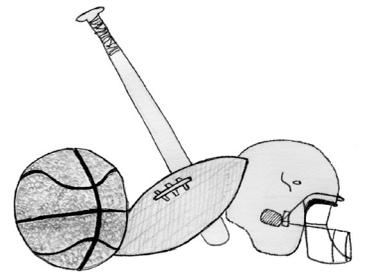
he responded to eleven tweets that were sent to him by fans. Instead of giving bland and basic answers to the questions, he decided to spread the Wisdom of Zlatan to his followers.

After taking over the Swedish language and internet social media, Zlatan has now moved to becoming the master of television. Since beginning the "Dare to Zlatan" campaign, Nike has released three, thirty seconds clips titled "Trust Your Instincts". The first one has Zlatan standing on a stone platform in the middle of a field of lava. He begins juggling a ball, tossing in a couple of casual around-the-worlds for good measure. He then chests the ball up and bicycle kicks it a solid mile, smashing into a volcano and making it erupt—cool cool, whatever: sweet special effects. However, the second commercial ups the ante. This time he

stands in a desolate snow-covered wasteland, and begins by placing a ball on the ground. In the distance is a tiger licking the blood off of its paws after a good meal. Zlatan smacks a free kick that hits the ledge above the tiger's head, causing the tiger to roar in anger. Zlatan responds by nodding his head in a classic "You mad, bro?" gesture. It's ridiculous and awesome, a pretty unbeatable commercial to exhibit the Power of Zlatan. But the third commercial tops the impressive list. He is standing blindfolded in a clay canyon with a metal ball at his feet. He lunges forward, dribbling the ball left and right, maneuvering his body to avoid over ten different strikes of lightning. The sky then suddenly clears up, Zlatan removes his blindfold, and yells his own name up at the heavens. It is over. There is nothing more to say. You have been Zlataned.

Besides his off-field exploits, Zlatan is also not a half bad footballer. Last week he led his team Paris Saint-Germain to the quarterfinals of the UEFA Champions League with a dismantling of German side Bayer Leverkusen.

In the 36 games he has played for PSG this season, he has scored 38 goals, 23 of which were in league play, giving him nine more goals than the second leading scorer in Ligue 1. At age 32, when most strikers begin to decline in goal-scoring prowess, Zlatan is in the best form of his life. He is certainly making an early case for this year's Ballon d'Or, and continues to let people know how good of a player he is. He is a man who thrives in the limelight and never misses an opportunity for self-promotion. Some people would say that he is just an arrogant man who needs to stop being so full of himself. Wrong. Those people are just jealous, and as Zlatan would probably tell you, the only cure to jealousy is learning how to dare to Zlatan.



## march madness preview

by mikestorace

Selection Sunday has come and gone, and you know what the means boys and girls! Time for the shit show randomness that is MARCH MADNESS. Look out for a lot of upsets this year, because there is quite the level playing field. More so than past tournaments, anyone can beat anyone, and this is sure to be an exciting and unpredictable show.

Warren Buffet, the CEO of Berkshire Hathaway and infamous billionaire, has upped the ante this year by leveling a \$1 billion prize to anyone who picks a perfect bracket. Yes that's right. \$1 billion could be yours if you make the right selection for all 63 teams in the tournament. Of course Buffet can afford the prize. According to Forbes, he is the 4th richest billionaire in the world with an estimated net worth of nearly \$60 billion. He can afford it.

### Favorites

#### Louisville

The Cardinals won the tournament last year, and are looking quite strong. The senior Russ Smith and Coach Rick Pitino are looking to cement their team's legacy.

#### Wichita State

The Shockers have managed to pull off the undefeated tournament. This is the first time a team has pulled this off in 10 years. Critics cite their weak-ass league as evidence against their superiority. However, they did make it to the Final Four last year and lost to the champions Louisville. Live by the three, die by the three.

#### Florida

This team has some really solid seniors, and can score from anywhere on the court. They've only lost two games on the season and are looking to make a deep run in the tournament.

### Long Shots

#### University of North Carolina

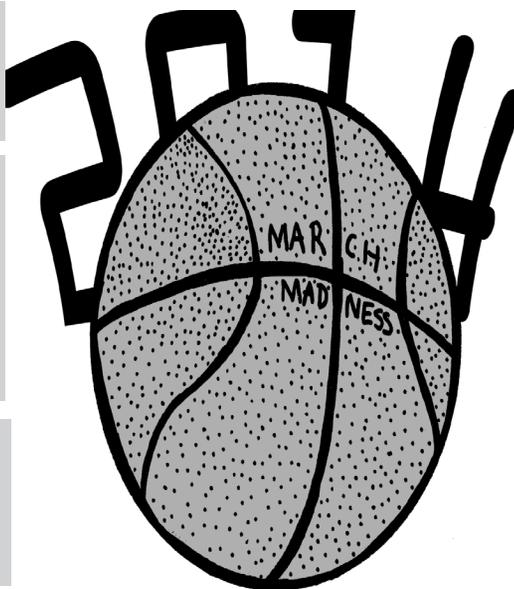
You never know which UNC will show up. Will it be the team that knocked off Louisville, Kentucky, and Michigan State? Or it will be the team that lost to UAB, Belmont, and Miami? Either way, this team is capable of beating any team in the tournament.

#### Creighton

Doug McDermott is an actual champion, and his dad Greg is a great coach. Doug currently sits at fifth on the NCAA all-time scoring list, which is pretty damn impressive. He also recently cemented his roll as College Basketball's Secret Weapon in a Sports Illustrated Magazine cover that paid tribute to Larry Bird.

#### Colorado

Love rooting for the Buffs. Their only quality win is against Kansas, but they have the firepower to get a win or two.



# trash.

## i want you so bad

someone on campus catch your eye?  
couldn't get a name?  
submit your love anonymously  
[uvm.edu/~watertwr/iwysb.html](http://uvm.edu/~watertwr/iwysb.html)

I see you all places,  
Climbing gym, library, bars,  
All of the same spaces.  
We are tinder matches.  
You sent me a message,  
You're the cutest of catches.  
So let me buy you a drink,  
Before I see you out again,  
Accept the beer, don't think.  
**When:** all the time  
**Where:** Everywhere  
**I saw:** an Ale's bartender  
**I am:** an awesome blonde

We send each other fun texts  
I'd never want to be your ex.  
I heard a rumor you were into me  
Little do you know this makes me grin with glee.  
I wish you'd come forward with your thoughts  
So you wouldn't make my stomach churn in knots.  
Believe it or not I like you too  
Now let's get together like paper and glue.  
**When:** Every day  
**Where:** So many places  
**I saw:** My friend  
**I am:** A friend



# the ear

overheard a conversation in b-town?  
was it hilarious? dumb? inspirational?  
tell **the ear** and we'll print it.  
[uvm.edu/~watertwr/ear.html](http://uvm.edu/~watertwr/ear.html)

### First Floor of Bailey-Howe

*Guy:* Fuck school, this shit is so hard! Why didn't I just get into Hogwarts!?

### Cyber Cafe

*Girl 1:* That's a creepy-ass strawberry.

*Girl 2:* Wait, that's a strawberry? I thought it was a rooster...

### Simpson Dining Hall

*Girl 1:* I think I want some protein.

*Girl 2:* Like bread?

*Girl 1:* Yeah, like cinnamon raisin toast!

### The Redstone Market

*Asian guy:* I once asked a girl out by typing it into a calculator and passing it to her.

*Non-Asian girl:* That's so Asian.

### Church Street

*Drunk Girl:* I can't wait until technology enables me to teleport directly into Sputies. Until then, I'm considering permanently tattooing "Ninja Turtle" on my hand...

You were surprisingly nice about the whole situation.  
You were talking on the phone, but (without making any eye contact) suddenly stopped your conversation to talk to me.

The warmth in your hand warmed mine as you introduced yourself to me, and I introduced myself to you.  
You asked if I had seen you on campus before.

Knowing this was super awkward and you seemed a little wired on alcohol or drugs (I wasn't sure yet), I said, "No, I don't think so", although I'm pretty sure I had seen you before.

You thought I was beautiful.

You also explained that it had been 8 weeks since you had been drunk (from my perspective, the whole situation became very clear).

You continued by questioning the Ben & Jerry's ice cream I carried and after explaining why I had it, you were confused as to why I wasn't eating it (were you aware of how cold it was outside?!)

Our conversation was coming to a close, and you said that if I ever saw you on campus I should tell you how much of an ass you were.

You said it was a great pleasure to meet me, and you'd hope to see me again.

I can't say that 'I want you so bad' especially because I'm in a relationship, but I think it'd be cool to meet you again; preferably when you're not drunk.

But let's be honest, do you even remember any of that night?!

**When:** Super late Friday night or super early Saturday morning

**Where:** Outside L/L

**I saw:** A vaguely familiar face

**I am:** Waiting to see you and then laugh to myself

# you booze you looze

Booze makes you lose stuff. Whether you lost something you truly loved, woke up with someone else's by mistake, or straight-up want repent for your klepto tendencies, the WT wants to hear about it.

[uvm.edu/~watertwr/ybyl.php](http://uvm.edu/~watertwr/ybyl.php)

### Downtown

I swore I went out with \$100 the other night and only seem to have \$4 left. To everyone I bought drinks for: blackout self says you're welcome.

### Bradley Street

Confession time: if you're wondering where your basil plants went last summer, they are thriving in my my kitchen. The pots were so beautiful, so I helped myself to them on the way back from the bars one night. Oops.

### Purgatory

I LOSE ALL OF MY EARRINGS AT THE BARS?  
WHY, GOD, WHY?

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# tunes.



## hearing voices

by benberrick

Phantogram, otherwise known as “the band whose one popular song keeps popping up on your Naked and Famous Pandora station,” has an unfortunate tendency, like Gorillaz, to produce one-hit wonders on otherwise thoroughly unremarkable albums. Their single “When I’m Small” on album *Eyelid Moves* was a big hit, particularly after being featured in an episode of MTV’s *Skins* and several commercials. The album as a whole, though, was nothing particularly special: a well-composed, decently attempted freshman attempt that, while certainly impressive for an indie-pop startup’s first album, didn’t quite pull off the magic to make the waves that it was capable of or produce a vibe as catchy as contemporaries with similar sounds (Passion Pit, Naked and Famous, etc.).

During the last few months of 2013 however, duo Josh Carter and Sarah Barthel began releasing a few select songs from their new album *Voices*, and the difference in sound was immediately recognizable. Singles like “Black Out Days” and “Never Going Home” managed to forge a vibe distinct from the relative homogeneity of their first LPs. Raucous, dissonant, and with a hollow echo reminiscent of a performance in an empty concert hall, these tunes man-

aged to defy the conventions of the styles that inspired them, while also paying a kind of respect to tropes. By the time 2014 rolled in and the album formally dropped, it was clear that their sophomore effort would succeed where their earlier work had come up short. After getting a chance to listen all the way through a few times, I can confidently say that Phantogram has produced an album that properly showcases both their voice and talent.

Starting with the pitchy wailing of a guitar interrupted by static, “Nothing But Trouble” sets the mood of the rest of the experience. Dark and heavy on an echoing synth, Barthel’s voice nevertheless carries the music along, stringing together disparate ostinatos and a growing pulse that injects even more dissonance as it fades in and out of the bass. “Black Out Days” and “Fall In Love” both preserve this full sound, each employing a kind of chant-like instrumental sampling to back Barthel’s ethereal lead. Throughout, the poppy 80s synth grows in strength until it takes the reigns in “Never Going Home,” which manages to slow the tempo to a slow dance, though the synth doesn’t let up, reinforcing a beat that sounds more like something from the Chromantics than a pop band. We hear



Carter’s voice in the lead for the first time in a performance undeniably invoking Phil Collin’s moodier work.

“The Day You Died,” “Howling At The Moon,” and “Bad Dreams” puts Barthel back in the lead, and the three bleed together into a strangely intoxicating trip that never fails to reassert the album’s eerie dissonance. Bill Murray pulls us up out of this hypnotism into a chilled return to the full synth sound; it sounds like a hip hop inspired homage to ambient producers like Dead Horse Beats. After giving us another dance inspired piece in the form of “Celebrating Nothing,” the album returns com-

fortably to bizarre echo-y darkness with “My Only Friend,” wherein Barthel croons to the listener in a way that settles somewhere between little girl in a horror movie and genuinely sweet confession.

With such a strong showing, there is no doubt that Phantogram has even more to show us. *Voices* is a shot across the bow of those who would have dismissed them as an underdeveloped talent without proof of mettle and one of the best albums released so far in 2014. ■

## all my friends are too hip for me

or, how not being musically inclined makes me feel like a social pariah

by katjaritchie

It’s not even that I have a shitty taste in music. It’s that I almost don’t have a taste in music at all. That tired party question, “So, like, what type of music do you listen to?” makes me break out in hives. My answer: I don’t know, dude. I really don’t. I listen to stuff given to me by my cool friends with film cameras and hobbies and coherent fashion sense and then I keep listening to it for, like, five years. I could rattle off a few bands, but I’d sort of feel like a fraud, because beyond their ubiquitous presence on my “Recently Played,” I don’t know a whole hell of a lot about them. I listen to a lot of Taylor Swift. Like, a lot. Girl’s got some easy melodies, good for road tripping. And, for basically any culturally-aware and aesthetically-minded young adult, that’s pretty much where the conversation ends.

Before you grab your torches and pitchforks, I should offer the disclaimer that I do enjoy music, very much, in fact. I sing, I’ve done musical theater, I’ve played certain riffs and melodies over and over again (on a CD or something; not, like,

instruments) just because they seemed to hit the right nerve, and I’ve been moved to tears and fury and joy by the right set of lyrics. I like music. I like it a lot.

But there’s something, if you talk to someone who’s really passionate about music, with which I will never be able to

“maybe there’s *some group* out there that I haven’t found yet, and they’ll be the one I *fangirl* after with the **tenacity** of a rabid german shepherd”

identify. It’s more than the music making you feel; it’s feeling the music itself. It’s more than hearing melody and harmony and strings and horns and great crashing percussion slipping over and through one another; it’s speaking its language. Or so I’ve been told. People try and explain these things to me, that one chord that just gets them right there, and sometimes I hear

it. But most of the time there’s something missing.

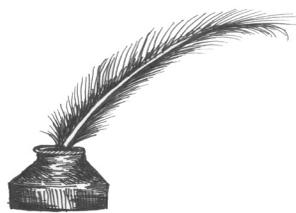
For a long time, I wanted (and still do want) to get it, to not be missing out on this great indescribable unknown that people experience through music. All creative types experience the same sort of synthe-

sis of everything you know and think and want and love and hate and feel all coalescing into some type of force beyond rational thought; usually it’s where the best kind of art comes from. I’m no stranger to that sentiment, but for me, it just doesn’t come out set to a rhythm or with a hungry determination to know every single thing about members of a certain band. Many a

moon have I wasted poring over YouTube, Soundcloud, Wikipedia, Spotify, anything to broaden my horizons; maybe there’s some group out there that I haven’t found yet, and they’ll be the one I fangirl after with the tenacity of a rabid German Shepherd. It’s worked a couple times, but nothing groundbreaking has come of it.

Unfulfilled artistic longings aside, this also means there’s a fundamental level on which I can’t see eye to eye with a lot of my friends. Also, like, the world. And I’m sorry. I can’t help it. And despite my best efforts, I feel like I’m up against some radical character flaw that somehow renders me less of a person, at least in the eyes of people who actually say things like, “Wait, you’re not into music? Are you even a person?” So, go ahead, talk my ear off about a particularly cohesive album or the artist that saved your teenage soul. I’ll listen, and I might tune in and out, but I’ll get it. Make me a mix if all else fails; I guarantee that shit will be on replay in my car long after graduation. ■

# créatif stuffé.



"the guilt of my dark deed  
*disturbed me but little*"

by mikaelawaters

The man did not love his wife. Not to say that she was incapable of being loved, nor he incapable of giving it, but they had married young for practical reasons decided by pragmatic people. Aesthetically, her looks were not unappealing, and her character neither shrill nor cruel, yet their union lacked the passion and excitement that he had hoped would classify his wedding, his bride, and his life. Inexhaustible opportunity was condensed into the gold tether on his finger and the cloth, patterned noose that now comprised his daily dress.

And so he went to work, he made money, and he subsisted at the basest level he had ever feared for the grand life he had imagined—each day pulling the noose tighter and tighter around the now aged and sagging skin of his neck. One night as he soullessly ate the meal his wife had so lovingly made, he began to choke. In a fit of coughing, he fumbled to loosen the tie wrapped at his neck. Red with rage and lack of air, he grabbed the knife from his plate and sawed the noose free.

"Darling, are you alright?" queried his wife. The man's hands clenched the table, the gold of his ring glinting. The man looked up—eyeing his wife with more emotion than had been displayed in the totality of their marriage. He clasped the knife once more. Twice. Three times he stabbed her.

"Darling, I'm swell," he exhaled. The tie fell to the floor and the man left the dining room, free. ■

realizing i am not the **center of the universe**  
upon discovering the front page of the *boston globe*  
from the day of my birth: december 2, 1993.

by staceybrandt

It sticks out of my baby book like a bookmark,  
a few pages of black and white print, folded and creased.  
For once, I decide to open it.

Strangely, nowhere  
among the justified print  
do I see the six, most important letters  
which, when spelled in glitter-glué or purple marker,  
all capitals or unsteady cursive,  
pass right through my eyes and into my chest  
because they are my name.

Strangely, nowhere  
above the captions  
do I regard my adorable infant face, big blue eyes  
or my enormous smile. Rather, the face of a strange man  
staring out of the black and white, dead-fish eyes,  
below the emboldened headline:

RAPIST HAS BEEN CAPTURED.

Who is RAPIST?

I cannot even read  
enough to know,  
which makes me feel  
even smaller

than that one night my dad forgot to pick me up  
from afterschool and I was the last kid, the leftover,  
forgotten as the day blinks  
and night arrives  
in early winter

even smaller  
than when big, loud planes fly over the house  
with terrific grumbles and screaming sound  
shaking me back into flesh,  
warning me  
I am reducible.

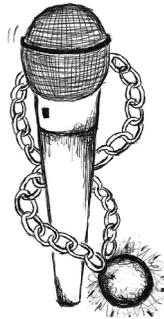
I fold the paper and re-crease it.  
No one is around which I find odd  
because I am seven.

Years later,  
I will reopen the pages and I will see many more names and pictures.  
I will believe at age seven, I wouldn't have known the word "Obituary"  
meant more than the people were old, but that they were in the ground. ■

## the cipher

with lauragreenwood

*Stretch out those hip-hop hamstrings, UVemcees, because it's  
time to bring your rhyme-slingin' back to the water tower.  
When you work hard and play hard all week long, nothing  
puts your mind at ease better than lyric therapy.  
This week, we get down in the Dirty South.*



30 hours later after riding in the van,  
We're past the Mason-Dixon, this nor'easter clan  
Let me begin and make it clear I'm lost  
Never went down south, avoided it at any cost  
It's not cause I'm stewing bout the Civ War still  
Not cause I'm ground-bound to our Appalachian hills  
But now I'm down south, the *diirry* hot land  
And I'm taken aback by some cultural demands  
First, it's the norm for fast food outings  
Popeye's parking lot was a-sufferin' from crowding  
Then, there's the signs for "adult" book stores  
Seen from every highway for the horny connoisseur  
But I was surprised too by a few southern traits  
Past the drawl and God, there appeared something great  
A community fused by a shared disaster  
Hearts intertwined by Katrina's force, outlast her  
Those people had true passion and clout  
Voices telling stories to make empathy shout  
So my expectations were amiss, sorry South, no diss  
Here I focused on the burgers and not what was missed  
Expected a land of conservative Bible-thumpers  
Yet, one was a botanist sparked with liberal-minded jumpers  
So take the dirty south by car or sky  
Challenge what you thought, and wave those stereotypes bye-bye.

—by mack daddy crawdad all-that-and-a-bucket-o'-chicken LG. ■

## 'one week' by the barenaked ladies

by alexgriffin

the week I thought that you were going to kiss me again I'm sorry  
I got real enthused and couldn't sleep and crashed my bike

there was some codeine in my room that I thought I should  
get rid of all at once the honorable way (hara-kiri with a glass of water)

seeing as I was maybe entering a new phase in my life  
where I'd have fewer reasons to just rail stuff and pass out

why not one for the road, right-  
waking up eighteen hours later

feeling like blood dripping from the ceiling  
and remembering the bike gash on my forehead

the rash I had got worse (I was anxious  
about you seeing it and had rehearsed out

the conversation where I explained that it wasn't infectious:  
'it's stress-related, ha ha, I'd grin, as my hands moved in a diversion play)

and I hadn't finished some presentation that I scrambled to .ppt  
but the professor was in Albany for some fucking adult paintball

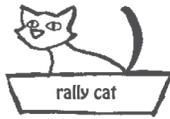
competition and I forgot my sister's birthday and didn't get paid but  
I wanted to have money for hanging out with you ("8pm sat. rite k")

so I lived off a bad packet of eggs and worse ramen  
and vomiting that up I felt like a male seahorse giving birth

which I thought would be funny to tell you about but like at what point  
do you start telling people about what your life is really like

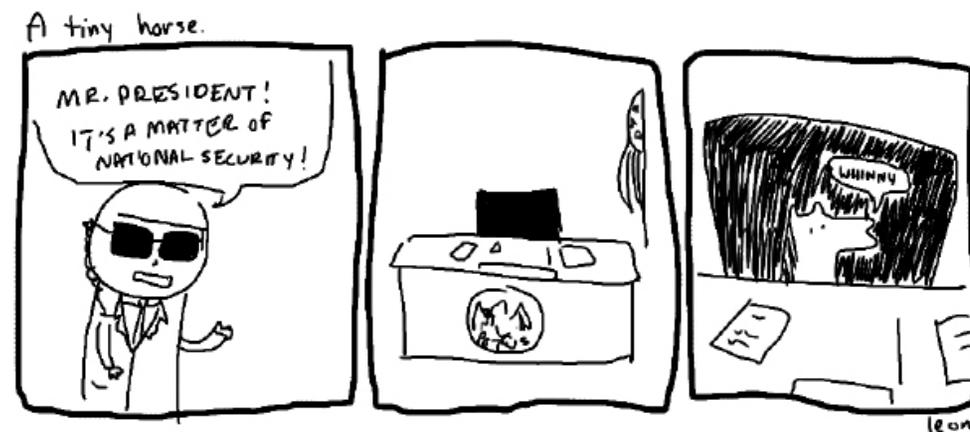
but now that I know you're not going to kiss me again  
none of these things are really problems anymore ■

# cat litter.

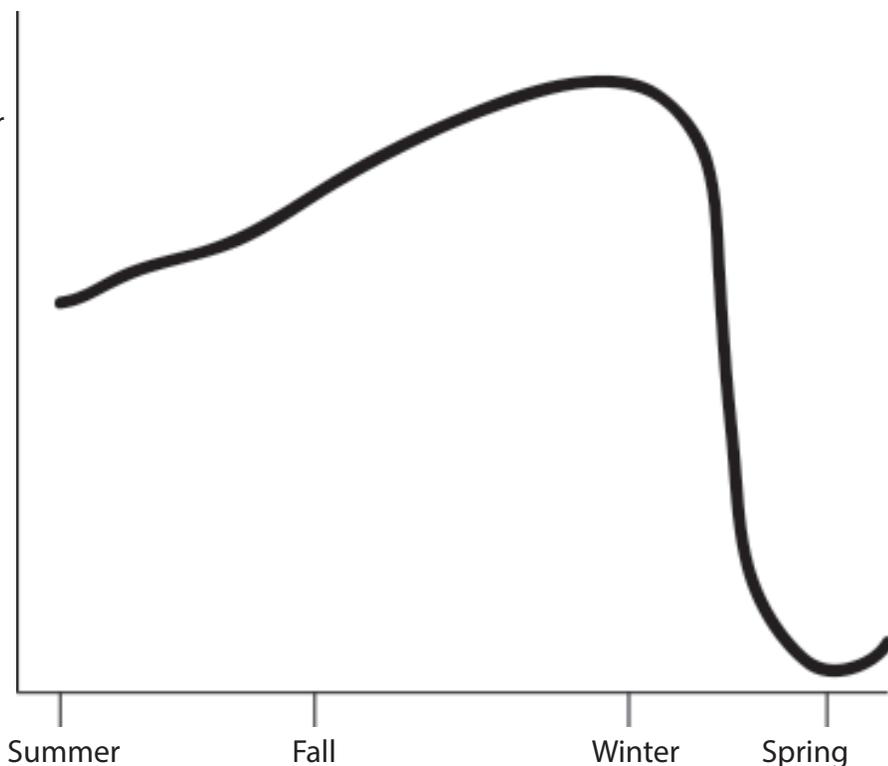


with collincappelle

the water tower is proud to present the new comic, *a tiny horse*, by leonardbartenstein.



How much the average UVMer loves snow



## Tip o' the Week

There has been a severe lack of snow angels this year so if someone could pick up the slack, that would be great



## burlington's secret election

As you may or may not know, every year Burlington has its city elections during UVM's Spring Break so as to prevent students voting and gumming up the democratic process with their drunken revelry. Since we are dedicated to the truth and only serve up the finest journalism, we present you with the highlights of the voting results.

- Burlington has been redistricted to better represent the population. There used to be 7 wards but since some areas grow faster, redistricting is necessary to allow equal voter representation.
- There were many propositions dealing with gun laws this year, so they are listed for convenience:
  - You can no longer bring a gun into an establishment with a liquor license (so much for my late night drunken gun games in Pearl Street Bev, I will miss you)
  - Firearms can be seized from persons deemed to be the aggressor in domestic abuse cases
  - When your registered firearm is not on your person it must be safely locked away.
  - Before you shoot someone you must ask them where they would like to be shot.
  - You can either own bullets or a gun, not both.
- The waterfront will be renovated including but not limited to improvements to the sailing center, marina, amusement park with a rollercoaster, monorail from The Skinny Pancake to North Beach, and a hot chocolate fountain through out the winter months.
- The overall city tax rate went up by 5000% or 2.97%, I honestly cannot remember.
- The public school budget passed.
- The "Mandatory Marijuana" proposition was shot down. This proposition would have required a person, under penalty of law, to get high if they needed to "chill the fuck out".
- Another proposition that was voted against was the movement to make CCTA buses into mountain shuttles during times of extreme pow-pow, (that's powder for all you non-shredders).